

Epidemiology

Birmingham's Health

The infant mortality statistics were better than ever in 1964 according to the annual report of the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. E. L. M. Millar, despite a high birth rate and large numbers of births in poorly housed immigrant families. He records the introduction of fluoride into the drinking-water on 4 June 1964—"by far the most important step . . . towards improving the health of Birmingham." There had been no case of diphtheria or poliomyelitis in the city for over three years—"a great triumph for immunization"—but he reports that less than half the child population are fully protected against diphtheria. Little headway had been made against tuberculosis since 1959. There were 793 cases then as compared with 742 in 1964. He suggests that notifications from among immigrants born in Asia are largely responsible for keeping the numbers up, and adds: "These figures, like those of infant mortality, indicate where the application of intensive effort is needed and

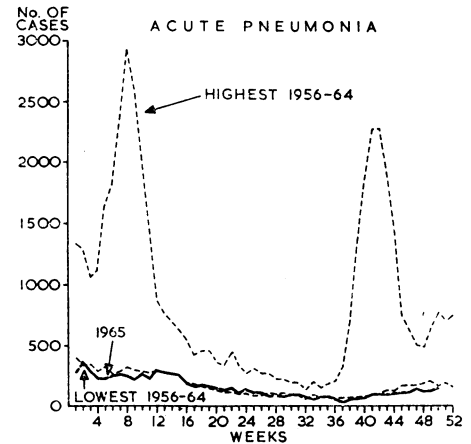
measures by the central Government are necessary to supplement local action." Decentralization of those health visitors engaged solely on geriatric problems has greatly facilitated their collaboration with general practitioners, district nurses, and other workers. About 60% of the effort of the District Nursing Service is devoted to the elderly.

Less Fall-out

In the first half of 1965 the average deposition of caesium-137 and strontium-90 from air and rain over the United Kingdom was about 40% of that for the previous year. Material from two low-yield Chinese nuclear explosions on 16 October 1964 and 14 May 1965 contributed a very small percentage of long-lived radioactivity.—*Radioactive Fall-out in Air and Rain: Results to the Middle of 1965*, U.K. Atomic Energy Authority, 1965 (H.M.S.O. 7s. net).

Graphs of Infectious Diseases

The graph below shows the uncorrected numbers of cases of acute pneumonia in England and Wales. Figures for 1965 are compared with the highest and lowest figures for each week in the previous years shown.



INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND VITAL STATISTICS

Summary for British Isles for week ending 4 December (No. 49) and corresponding week 1964.

Figures of cases are for the countries shown and for Greater London. Figures of deaths and births are for the whole of England and Wales (London included), Greater London, the 17 principal towns in Scotland, the 10 principal towns in Northern Ireland, and the 14 principal towns in Eire.

A blank space denotes disease not notifiable or no return available.

The table is based on information supplied by the Registrars-General of England and Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland, and Eire, the Ministry of Health and Local Government of N. Ireland, and the Department of Health of Eire.

CASES	1965					1964					DEATHS	1965					1964				
	Eng. & Wales	Gr. Lnd.†	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire	Eng. & Wales	Lnd A.C.	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire		Eng. & Wales	Gr. Lnd.†	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire	Eng. & Wales	Lnd A.C.	Scot.	N. Ire.	Eire
Diphtheria ..	0	0	0	0		0		0	0	1	Diphtheria ..	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	
Dysentery ..	611	84	146	12	6	418		120	10	7	Dysentery ..	0	0			1		0		0	
Encephalitis, acute ..	2	2	0	0		5		0	0		Encephalitis, acute ..									0	
Enteric fever: Typhoid ..	3	1	1	0		0		0	0	1	Enteric fever ..	0	0	0		0	0	0			0
Paratyphoid ..	2	0	0	0		3		4B	0	0	Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years	8	1	1	0	7	1	1	0		
Food-poisoning	91	14	9	0		73		36	0		Influenza ..	21	1	2	0	13	0	2	1		
Infective enteritis or diarrhoea under 2 years					14	36				19	22	Measles ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Measles* ..	3,757	151	31	46	107	10,704		251	174	182	Meningococcal infection ..					2					
Meningococcal infection ..	5	2	4	0		13		10	0	1	Pneumonia ..	820	165	28	4	557	17	32	12		
Ophthalmia neonatorum	11	5	0	0		21		1	0		Poliomyelitis, acute ..	0	0			0			0	0	
Pneumonia† ..	151	18	104	14	5	206		127	9		Scarlet fever ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Poliomyelitis, acute: Paralytic ..	1	0	0	0		{ 3		1		0	Tuberculosis: Respiratory ..	46	2	5	{ 6	48	4	2	3		
Non-paralytic ..	0	0	0	0		{ 0		1		0	Non-respiratory ..				{ 0		0	2			
Puerperal fever§	119	56	3	0		82		2	1		Whooping-cough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Scarlet fever ..	566	64	48	10	10	558		40	12	12	Deaths 0-1 year	323	54	21	6	293	25	9	13		
Tuberculosis: Respiratory ..	219	49	32	12		274		43	8		Deaths (excluding stillbirths)	12,295	1958	679	156	10,138	601	162	159		
Non-respiratory ..	39	13	6	2		43		6	1		LIVE BIRTHS	15,419	2674	919	331	15,228	948	231	368		
Whooping-cough	339	51	21	26	3	282		20	7	9	STILLBIRTHS	259	43	13		242	12				

* Measles not notifiable in Scotland, whence returns are approximate.

† Includes primary and influenzal pneumonia.

§ Includes puerperal pyrexia.

‡ Not comparable with London A.C.